

## Message Text

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ORIGIN EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 SS-15 NSC-05 SSO-00 NSCE-00 CCO-00

PRS-01 /034 R

DRAFTED BY EUR/EE:ARTHOMPSON/DJW

APPROVED BY EUR:JGLOWENSTEIN

EUR/EE:CBROWN

EUR/P:MJERABEK

S/S: MR. ORTIZ

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O 282026Z JUL 75 ZFF5

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY BELGRADE IMMEDIATE

INFO USDEL SECRETARY IMMEDIATE

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FOR NICHOLAS G. ANDREWS

E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: MASS

SUBJECT: NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON US ARMS SALES TO YUGO-  
SLAVIA

FOLLOWING IS TEXT OF NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE JULY 26, DATE-  
LINED JULY 24, BELGRADE, BY MALCOLM BROWNE. HEADLINE,  
"HOPE DIM FOR ARMS SALES TO BELGRADE:"

1. "AMERICAN HOPES OF SELLING ESTABLISHING VALUABLE POLI-  
TICAL CONTACTS WITH MILITARY LEADERS HERE HAVE APPARENTLY  
BEEN STALEMATED.(NOTE: ONE PHRASE EVIDENTLY DROPPED FROMSEN-  
TENCE AFTER "ESTABLISHING.")

2. THE INITIATIVE FOR THE SALES DATES FROM A MEETING HERE  
LAST NOVEMBER BETWEEN PRESIDENT TITO AND SECRETARY OF  
STATE KISSINGER. THE YUGOSLAV LEADER REPORTEDLY EXPRESSED  
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INTEREST IN BUYING LIMITED QUANTITIES OF AMERICAN EQUIPMENT

POSSIBLY INCLUDING TRAINING PLANES AND CERTAIN ADVANCED DEFENSIVE-WEAPONS SYSTEM.

3. THE POTENTIAL SALES CAME TO BE REGDED BY AMERICAN POLICY-MAKERS AS IMPORTANT, MAINLY BECAUSE OF THE CONTACTS THEY WOULD AFFORD WITH THE YUGOSLAV MILITARY COMMANDERS ON A DIRECT AND,IT WAS HOPED, FRIENDLY BASIS. THE POLITICAL ROLE OF THE YUGOSLAV ARMY COULD BECAME PIVOTAL AFTER THE PASSING OF PRESIDENT TITO, WHO IS 83.

-- PRICES AND SECURITY

4. YUGOSLAV SOURCES HAVE MADE IT KNOWN THAT THEY ARE DIS- PLEASED WITH THE RISING PRICES OF AMERICAN ARMS. THEY ARE SAID TO BE MORE ANNOYED BY REPORTS THAT THE UNITED STATES IS HOLDING BACK CERTAIN PARTICULARLY DESIRED ITEMS TO PREVENT THE TECHNOLOGY INVOLVED FROM PASSING INTO COMMUNIST HANDS, EVEN THOUGH THOSE HANDS ARE INDEPENDENT OF MOSCOW.

5. THERE HAVE BEEN STRONG SIGNS IN THE YUGOSLAV PRESS THIS MONTH THAT HOPES FOR AN ARMS DEAL MAY NOW BE DEAD. THE GOVERNMENT-CONTROLLED PRESS PUBLISHED TWO HARSH ATTACKS ON REPORTS OF PROMOTION BY WASHINGTON OF AN ARMS RACE IN EUROPE. THE COMMANDER OF THE ARMY: GEN. NIKOLA LJUBICIC, MADE A SPEECH IN WHICH,WITHOUTNAMING THE UNITED STATES, HE CRITICIZED FOREIGN POWERS THAT "INTRODUCE LIMITATIONS TO THE SALE OF ARMS TO OUR COUNTRY."

6. PUBLIC STATEMENTS OF THIS KIND AT LEAST IMPLY THAT UNLESS WASHINGTON MODIFIES ITS POSITIONS ON ARMS SALES, BOTH WITH RESPECT TO PRICE AND SECURITY, YUGOSLAVIA IS NO LONGER INTERESTED.

7. SINCE MR. KISSINGER WAS HERE EIGHT MONTHS AGO, VISITORS TO YUGOSLAVIA HAVE INCLUDED AN ASSISTANT SECRETARY OF DEFENSE AND THE SECRETARY OF THE AIR FORCE. WHEN PRESIDENT FORD VISITS YUGOSLAVIA, THE SUBJECT OF ARMS SALES IS LIKELY TO COME UP.

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8. BUT NEGOTIATIONS ON THE SALES ARE SAID TO BE AT DEAD CENTER.

9. PART OF THE AMERICAN INTEREST WAS TO OFFSET THE EQUIP- MENT THAT YUGOSLAVIA IMPORTS FROM THE SOVIET UNION, HER ONLY FOREIGN SUPPLIER OF ARMS AT THE MOMENT. IN THE AMERICAN VIEW, ANYTHING THAT REDUCES YUGOSLAV DEPENDENCE ON SOVIET ARMS IS DESIRABLE.

10. IT HAS BEEN ASSUMED THAT THE ONLY YUGOSLAV INSTITUTION WITH ANY INDEPENDENT STRENGTH AND ORGANIZATION OTHER THAN THE LEAGUE OF COMMUNISTS IS THE ARMY, EVEN THOUGH MILITARY OFFICERS ARE MEMBERS OF THE COMMUNIST PARTY.

11. THERE ARE FEARS HERE AND ABROAD THAT AFTER THE DEATH OF PRESIDENT TITO, THE RULING PARTY MIGHT FALL INTO AT LEAST TEMPORARY DISARRAY.

-- A ROLE FOR THE ARMY

12. A PROTRACTED AND CONFUSED INTERIM COULD BE DANGEROUS TO INTERNAL STABILITY AND MIGHT LEAD TO THE ASCENDANCY OF PRO-MOSCOW COMMUNISTS. DURING THE CRITICAL TRANSITION TO A NEW ADMINISTRATION, THE ARMY MIGHT PLAY A PIVOTAL STABILIZING ROLE. ANY GOODWILL TOWARD WASHINGTON ON THE PART OF THE 230,000-MAN YUGOSLAV MILITARY MIGHT HELP KEEP YUGOSLAVIA INDEPENDENT OF MOSCOW.

13. AFTER THE BREAK BETWEEN YUGOSLAVIA AND THE SOVIET BLOC IN 1948, THE UNITED STATES MOVED QUICKLY TO BUTTRESS YUGOSLAV FORCES AGAINST SOVIET REPRISALS. FROM 1949 TO 1962, YUGOSLAVIA RECEIVED \$800-MILLION IN AMERICAN MILITARY AID. BUT THEREAFTER SOVIET-YUGOSLAV RELATIONS IMPROVED MARKEDLY, AND AMERICAN AID ENDED.

14. TODAY, ALTHOUGH SOME OLD AMERICAN EQUIPMENT REMAINS IN SERVICE, THE HEAVY, FIRST-LINE EQUIPMENT IS MOSTLY RUSSIAN.

15. THE ONLY FORMAL YUGOSLAV-AMERICAN MILITARY CONTACTS ARE THE CIRCUMSCRIBED ROLE HERE OF A THREE-MEMBER AMERICAN LIMITED OFFICIAL USE

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MILITARY ATTACHE STAFF AND A PROGRAM IN WHICH TWO YUGOSLAV OFFICERS ATTEND THE COMMAND AND GENERAL STAFF SCHOOL AT FORT LEAVENWORTH, KAN., EVERY YEAR." INGERSOLL

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## Message Attributes

**Automatic Decaptioning:** X  
**Capture Date:** 01 JAN 1994  
**Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Current Classification:** UNCLASSIFIED  
**Concepts:** ARMS, SALES, PRESS COMMENTS  
**Control Number:** n/a  
**Copy:** SINGLE  
**Draft Date:** 28 JUL 1975  
**Decaption Date:** 01 JAN 1960  
**Decaption Note:**  
**Disposition Action:** RELEASED  
**Disposition Approved on Date:**  
**Disposition Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Disposition Case Number:** n/a  
**Disposition Comment:** 25 YEAR REVIEW  
**Disposition Date:** 28 MAY 2004  
**Disposition Event:**  
**Disposition History:** n/a  
**Disposition Reason:**  
**Disposition Remarks:**  
**Document Number:** 1975STATE177429  
**Document Source:** CORE  
**Document Unique ID:** 00  
**Drafter:** ARTHOMPSON/DJW  
**Enclosure:** n/a  
**Executive Order:** N/A  
**Errors:** N/A  
**Film Number:** D750260-0146  
**From:** STATE  
**Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Image Path:**  
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**Legacy Key:** link1975/newtext/t19750715/aaaaanjy.tel  
**Line Count:** 157  
**Locator:** TEXT ON-LINE, ON MICROFILM  
**Office:** ORIGIN EUR  
**Original Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Original Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Original Previous Classification:** n/a  
**Original Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Page Count:** 3  
**Previous Channel Indicators:** n/a  
**Previous Classification:** LIMITED OFFICIAL USE  
**Previous Handling Restrictions:** n/a  
**Reference:** n/a  
**Review Action:** RELEASED, APPROVED  
**Review Authority:** KelleyW0  
**Review Comment:** n/a  
**Review Content Flags:**  
**Review Date:** 13 JUN 2003  
**Review Event:**  
**Review Exemptions:** n/a  
**Review History:** RELEASED <13 JUN 2003 by CunninFX>; APPROVED <27 OCT 2003 by KelleyW0>  
**Review Markings:**

Margaret P. Grafeld  
Declassified/Released  
US Department of State  
EO Systematic Review  
06 JUL 2006

**Review Media Identifier:**  
**Review Referrals:** n/a  
**Review Release Date:** n/a  
**Review Release Event:** n/a  
**Review Transfer Date:**  
**Review Withdrawn Fields:** n/a  
**Secure:** OPEN  
**Status:** NATIVE  
**Subject:** NEW YORK TIMES ARTICLE ON US ARMS SALES TO YUGO- SLAVIA  
**TAGS:** MASS, MILI, US, YO, BE  
**To:** BELGRADE  
**Type:** TE  
**Markings:** Margaret P. Grafeld Declassified/Released US Department of State EO Systematic Review 06 JUL 2006